

Pulsating Recital by the Pomegranate Piano Trio

Carlisle Music Society, St Cuthbert's Church, Thurs 19th Nov. 2015

The Pomegranate Piano Trio (Fenella Barton - violin; Rebecca Hepplewhite - cello and Andrew West - piano) gave an exhilarating performance. First the Piano Trio in B Flat Major, K.502 - a typical Mozartian cornucopia of catchy melodies and subtle developments, played superbly by these international performers. The joyful, smile-inducing Allegro was followed by the sparse but sublime Larghetto, proof indeed that less can be more. The powerful closing Allegretto allowed for fleet-of-finger gymnastics from each musician.

If there was a feeling of 'deja entendu' about the Mozart, Gabriel Faure's Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 120, reached into more challenging territory. Faure had lived through the horrors of the Commune of 1871 - Paris is no stranger to violent death - and the First World War, when, as a completely deaf 78 year old, he wrote this superb trio. His pending mortality hovered over this fiery reflection on troubled times, interspersed with soul-touching melodies and modernistic harmonic progressions. This is Faure at his very - and distinctly French - best.

The Brahms Piano Trio No 1 was a youthful composition revised by the German master in 1891. It blends memorable melodies, stirring percussive passages with moments of ethereal serenity. Pulsating playing melded with great sensitivity from each member of the Pomegranate Trio made for a powerful emotional ending to this fine recital.

The next Carlisle Music Society recital is on 14th January 2016, when Trio Lugovkina, Walentin and Timofeyevsky offer a varied programme for flute, violin and piano.

Ted Cole